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Causes of High Dropouts & Poor Enrollment at Primary School Level in Balochistan: A Case Study of Chagai District

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Abstract: This research was carried out to explore causes of high dropouts and poor enrollment at primary school level in district Chagai Balochistan. The purpose of this study was to explore the Dropout & Low Enrolment causes, their interdependence and interconnectivity to be able to have a clear picture and find out recommendations and solutions of these issues. Governments in all tear are working harder and spending a lot of money to counter the present alarming situation in primary education, but results are not satisfactory. The research revealed that most of the parents 34.5% were illiterate, while 33.3% having matriculation or less education and 78.8%, distance as reason, 42.2% while 38.9% low family income, and 48.8%. Further, affecting factors identified as; poverty, illiteracy and non-availability of schools, lack of basic facilities, multi-grade teaching and access issues have a strong relation to low enrollment and high dropout.

Key Words: Causes, High Dropout, Poor Enrolment, Chagai

Introduction

Pakistan is the fifth most populated country in the world with a population of 211.17 million (Projected for 2019) (PEC 2019-20) with an annual growth rate of 2.40 per cent, among them 63.6 per cent live in rural areas whereas 36.4 per cent reside in urban area. Pakistan has a vast coastline, huge deserts, lush green agrarian fields, high mountains and long plain lands. It has enormous deposits of minerals like coal, salt, oil, bauxite, gypsum, marble, copper, silver, gold etc. It is an agricultural country with a variety of seasons and climates, all the

major crops are produced in Pakistan. It has productive land, rivers and canal system for irrigation, four seasons that favour wheat, rice, cotton, and sugarcane etc. Pakistan has four provinces and the province of Punjab accommodates 56 per cent of the total population. It has very fertile land which is irrigated by the four rivers, namely Sindh, Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi, through a well-built canal system. The second most populated province of the country is Sindh, which accommodates 23 per cent of Pakistan's population. Its planes and fields are irrigated by

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the mighty River Indus through two barrages and a strong irrigation system. The third most populous province of Pakistan is Khyber Pakhtunkhwa formerly known as NWFP or North-Western Frontier Province, it accommodates 13 per cent of the total population of Pakistan. It has sky-high mountains and very hard-working and tough people capable of doing all sorts of jobs, Kabul and Swat are the main rivers along with other many small rivers. The 30 per cent area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is under agricultural use. The smallest province of Pakistan in terms of population is Balochistan which accommodates 6 per cent population of Pakistan. However, it is the largest province in terms of area and holds 44 per cent of Pakistan's land. The vast area of the provincial land is infertile and people living here depend on rain-fed agriculture, rearing animals and border trades, only 5 per cent of the area is under cultivation while 85 per cent of Balochistan's population resides in the rural areas. Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA) in Pakistan, is directly governed by the federal government of Pakistan and it is not a part of any province it accommodates only 2 per cent population of the country.

Education in Pakistan

Education is considered to be the most important segment contributing to the socio-economic development of nations, it is the most important instrument to enhance human capabilities and to achieve the desired objectives of economic development. Education

for all is the slogan of the Government of Pakistan as well as all the international development and rights-based organizations. In most of the countries, receiving primary education is compulsory for children. The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in its Article 25-A Right to Education narrates that:

The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law (Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan).

In Balochistan poverty remains one of the main reasons for such a dismal state of education in the province. This reflects that Pakistan has been unable to execute what is written in the constitution which is free of cost and a good standard of education for all kids aged from 5 to 16 (Kakar, 2019). Pakistan has also been unable to comply with the international growth criteria called Sustainable Development Goals that entail continuous learning and including children in schools by reducing dropouts and poor enrollments.

Dropping out of school means a child or student leaves school for personal, financial, social or any other reason. Arshi (2019) has identified seven reasons for dropout. These are poor health, academic difficulty, bad influence, family and socio-economic needs (poverty), retention, disengagement and transition. She advises that to prevent dropout, parents should get involved with the child and have realistic expectations.

Table 1

NER & Literacy Level in Pakistan

Indicators	National		Punjab		Sindh		KPK (including merged areas)		Balochistan	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
NER rate 6-10 years	66		73		58		64		40	
Literacy rate (%) 10 years and above	68	63	73	73	64	52	70	57	45	35
	60		64		57		55		40	
	71	49	73	57	68	44	75	36	54	24

Source: *Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2019-20*

Education in Balochistan

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan in terms of land area. It has the least population when compared to other provinces of Pakistan. The population is scattered to a vast area comprising little cultivated but about 90 per cent is considered an arid region. Here most of the people live in clusters because of the availability of basic necessities. Education in the province is much neglected. Primary education is the basis upon which the rest of the career is built.

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan area-wise, constituting 45% of the total area. The main purpose of education is thought to be developing good human beings but the province of Balochistan seems to be aloof of that right. Maqsood (2018) wrote private institutions are performing better than public. Private schools are providing better results and education despite a sum of Rs. 4000 per student spent on government schools and Rs. 2000 per student on private schools. In Balochistan unfortunately, 60% of households belong to poor families for whom it is difficult to make even bread and butter, so affording Rs. 2000 per kid per month seems out of the question.

Other problems encountered by the education system in Balochistan are the lack of financial help. In fact, many government school teachers say that they don't receive pay and funds to cover school costs. Furthermore, whatever amount is allotted is not dispersed to the related school and teachers and is postponed for years (Khan, 2019). Balochistan is a province gifted with wealth and resources but is getting left behind due to a lack of education. As per Pakistan Education Statistics 2017, around 70% aged 5 and 16 years kids in Baluchistan don't enrol in schools. Also, the

environment is not secure for education in Baluchistan.

The hobbling economy of Pakistan is also worsening the condition of the education sector in Pakistan. The depreciation of the local currency has forced the government to cut educational spending by 50%. Hence this has made the means and resources to boost education in the country and particularly in Baluchistan very scarce ("Higher Education in Baluchistan" 2019). These lead universities to curb their outlays and spending because of the inability of the Higher Education Commission to support them. In Balochistan, there are seven public universities. Higher Education Commission (HEC) funded Rs. 2.81 billion to universities of Balochistan, however need was Rs. 4.59 billion. This led universities to borrow the remaining amount which accumulated their debt.

Students in Balochistan are facing numerous problems if they want to study in another province rather than Balochistan, like financial constraints, distance and travelling involved and lack of internet service. Alam (2019) wrote students are helping themselves by taking the initiative to form societies and communities that help financial assistance to students by raising funds and helping fellow students also providing moral support, advice and explaining how to get admitted to universities. Financial constraints remain still a big issue in a province that has a big rural class and only a 27 % female literacy rate. This means 7 out of 10 females don't go to school in Baluchistan.

In Balochistan government schools, only 19.3% of schools have usable water facilities, only 28% of schools have toilet facilities, only 20.6% of schools have electricity and only 23% of schools have their boundary wall (EMIS 2016-17).

Table 2

Net Enrolment Rate (NER) 6-10 Years in Pakistan

Indicators	National		Punjab		Sindh		KPK (including merged areas)		Balochistan	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
NER rate 6-10 years	68	63	73	73	64	52	70	57	45	35

Indicators	National		Punjab		Sindh		KPK (including merged areas)		Balochistan	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Literacy rate (%)	60		64		57		55		40	
10 years and above	71	49	73	57	68	44	75	36	54	24

Source: Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2020

Early and primary education gives a basis for studying the progress of young children and their education, tutoring and schooling needs. The question arises if there is anything that can be noticed and learnt from these principles. One is always curious to know about human nature and what inspires the thinking, reactions and actions of individuals in a certain way (Cherry, 2020). These theories of early and primary education give a fair picture and answers to these questions and also to the communal factors. It assesses the uniqueness of a set of attributes displayed due to various factors like peer groups, household associations or personal dispositions.

Primary Education in Balochistan

The pre-primary is mainly known as kachi class in Balochistan, consisting of unadmitted younger siblings of students. Public sector schools are responsible for running these Kachi classes based on ECE (Early Childhood Education). It is a new national curriculum established by modern theories. Back in the day, Pakistani children began their tutoring when they turned five. The education trend has evolved a lot in the present years. Pre-school has now become a fundamental piece of the Pakistani educational structure. Almost every advanced educational system now offers preschool training. Pre-primary schooling consists of two years; and goes by various names: nursery school, playgroup, pre-prep and prep, Kindergarten 1 and 2, pre-junior school, Montessori school, and so on.

Education in District Chagai

In terms of education out of 158 districts of Pakistan Chagai ranks 91 having an education

score of 52.06 and a learning score of 55.58. In terms of school infrastructure, the district ranks 114 (out of 158) with a serious shortage of electricity, a score of 4.55 and a school building condition of 12.27. The lack of girls' schools is also a major factor.

According to EMIS 2019-20, the district has a total of 315 schools of primary to Higher secondary level and 86% of them are in rural areas. Of these 250 are primary, 35 are middle, 23 are high and 07 are higher secondary. There are 1325 sanctioned posts of school staff but only 916 staff members are appointed and the remaining 409 posts of teachers are still vacant for a long time. (Dept., 2019-20)

The literacy rate at Chagai is 29% for 15 plus population and 34% for 10 plus population. However, earning outcome is poor. The enrolment rate at the primary level is 40% but at the middle level, this decreased to 12% and at the secondary level it is only 2%. As high as 56% of the 6 - 15 age group children remain out of school. Out-of-school children include both, those who never were enrolled as well as those who dropped out. The survival rate is 28% at the primary level, 69% at the middle level and almost 100% at the secondary level.

Improper infrastructure and inconvenience of necessities discourage students from gaining knowledge. In Chagai district, 97% of the primary schools run without electricity and 69% without any boundaries, as stated by District Development Profile Chagai 2011) The district suffers from multiple issues in the backdrop of poverty and cultural constraints. However, issues in school availability, enrolment gaps in existing schools and missing facilities like water and toilets adversely affect

enrolment and retention. School availability bottleneck that appears at the primary to middle and secondary to higher secondary level further hampers the access situation. Teaching learning quality is a key concern in the Chagai district. The annual Status of Education Report 2015 shows poor learning outcomes of the students which leads to low survival and transition rates. Access and quality of education are discussed in detail in sections 4 and 5 of the sector plan.

Problem Statement

Early and primary education leads a child to further education in his life. But in Balochistan, a good number of children either drop out or do not get enrolled in their early and primary education. Balochistan has the lowest education achievements as compared to the other provinces of the country as a result further education does not materialize.

Literature Review

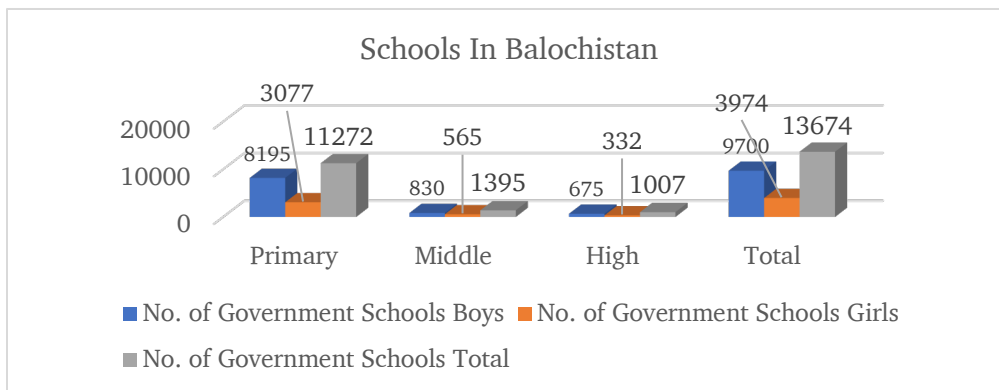
As per the study, despite recent efforts of regimes to revive the education sector, on paper, the progress in the educational sector is almost zero. Moreover, the pupils are not getting the benefits of policy changes and structural overhauls. Lack of education, high dropouts and low enrollments put the future of children at stake and increase the chances of them getting astray (Baloch, 2019). There are many reasons for the unsatisfactory performance of the educational sector of Baluchistan. Most of the inhabitants of Baluchistan are youngsters; the province is rich in natural resources and close to the sea. These are the positive points that must attract the attention of policymakers. Poor enrollment is clearly one of the grave issues facing the province. Governments in past have run programs to resolve this issue to ensure maximum enrollment of children. But along with the plan to enhance enrollment in schools, it is also compulsory to enhance the intake of

students in schools (Jamali, 2016). As a policy enhancing infrastructure and state of existing schools have been given preference over building new schools altogether. This is thought to make students remain in school and not drop out. Instructors are also required to work harder by the masses. A mechanism to gauge and assess school performance is essential to tackle the issue.

- In promoting education, the local government is very much helpful in promoting education and literacy in the country as they know that it will help them out in the form of skilled labour but they need to make sure that all the funds that are arose for education should be spent well and all the basic need are covered in it.
- The awareness programs must be conducted in the country for the parents so that they can also be counselled and help their children in choosing the path which is market-friendly. Parents play a gigantic role in the development of education if they become supportive many of the issues will get resolved flexibly. (Farooq, 2016)
- Educational reforms in Baluchistan are the need of the hour because lack of education, drop out and poor enrollments de motivate kids and they wander. Also, the law and order situation in Baluchistan is not good hence education is the only remedy to fight all these problems (Kakar, 2017). The security situation has hampered education in Baluchistan hence policymakers need to find a solution to this issue and give rise to a functional and up-to-date education system in the province. Creating awareness regarding the importance of education is the main challenge and also fighting the bureaucratic elements that hinder educational policy reforms should be done.

Graph 1

Schools in Balochistan



Source: BEMIS Education Department, 2020

Research Methodology

The research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem, there may be many steps and techniques to carry out research from gaining knowledge about the problem and understanding the problem more deeply to fix the parameters, to being able to employ various techniques, whether statistical or analytical that could give the proper solution of the problem.

According to Clifford Woody (Kothari 1988), “research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solutions; collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions; and at last carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis”. Kothari C.R. (2004) “term ‘research’ refers to the systematic method consisting of enunciating the problem, formulating a hypothesis, collecting the facts or data, analyzing the facts and reaching certain conclusions either in the form of solutions(s) towards the concerned problem or in certain generalizations for some theoretical formulation”.

Research Process

During the research process, we identified the problem and reviewed the works of literature to understand the extent and dimension of the

problem and the challenges that may be encountered during the process. We determined clear, understandable and researchable questions. We also assessed how the research questions should be approached. Once the questions were decided, we developed hypotheses based on those questions.

Research Approach

We plan to go for the mixed method which will include qualitative and quantitative methods involving parents, teachers and students as respondents.

Research Design & Methods

Quantitative: Quantitative data were collected through closed-ended questionnaires from Parents, dropout children and Primary school teachers.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Poate & Daplyn (1993); Sample size in setting the level of precision two things must be specified, an acceptable margin of error and confidence level. Generally, the estimates should be accurate with ten per cent plus or minus, with 95 per cent confidence. This means that error is greater than 10 per cent, with 95 per cent confidence. The most common confidence level used is 95 per cent, 99 per cent

is used when very strong evidence is required. 90 per cent confidence level is used when moderate levels are acceptable. The confidence levels are expressed as a value of the z-statistics of the normal distribution. If the sample size is large i.e. greater than thirty, the values of z are 1.96 at 95 percent and 1.64 at 90 percent.

Variation in the population (coefficient of variation) is another factor that influences the sample size. This measures the intrinsic variability of the characteristics being estimated within the population.

Variables

Independent Variables

Poverty, Student-Teacher Ratio, Low Income of Family, Illiteracy of Parents, Non-availability of schools, Long distance from home to school, Lack of Basic Facilities at school level.

Dependent Variables

High Dropout and Poor Enrollment.

Developing Research Instrument / the Questionnaire

A pre-designed close-ended questionnaire having a Likert scale was used for the quantitative survey. Five-point Likert Scale was used for data input where,

A semi-structured open-ended questionnaire was developed for Focus Group Discussions/ Qualitative survey.

Data collection

Keeping in view the objectives & hypotheses of the Study; the closed-ended questionnaire & checklist was designed and finalized after pretesting & validation. The data was collected from the sample respondents as parents, teachers and dropout children, through interviews & also group discussions. The data was processed & analyzed through the SPSS. 21

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were collected and processed with statistical tools SPSS and Excel. These tools were used to see the trends of the data. In this regard the frequency and percentage were determined; techniques were run. Qualitative data were analyzed through a standard format of qualitative research e. g. category and sub-theme.

The Statistical methods are used for analysis to calculate the descriptive & inferential statistics to test the hypotheses to estimate their significance level at 5 and 10 per cent, also used the ANNOVA, Model, Coefficient and Correlation.

Regression Model (Used for Data Analysis)

$$Y = a + bx_1 + \dots + e$$

Whereas

Y= Poor Enrolment & high dropout

X₁= Low income of a family

X₂= Illiteracy of parents

X₃= Non Availability of Schools

X₄= Long Distance

X₅= Lack of Basic facilities at the school level

X₆ = Poverty

X₇ = Student-Teacher Ratio (STR)

Table 3

Respondent Distribution about causes of Dropout in %

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Causes of dropout (Parent's opinion)	Low family income	35	38.9
	Lack of awareness	0	0.0
	Long distance from the school	38	42.2
	School environment/lack of facilities	17	18.9
Total		90	100.0

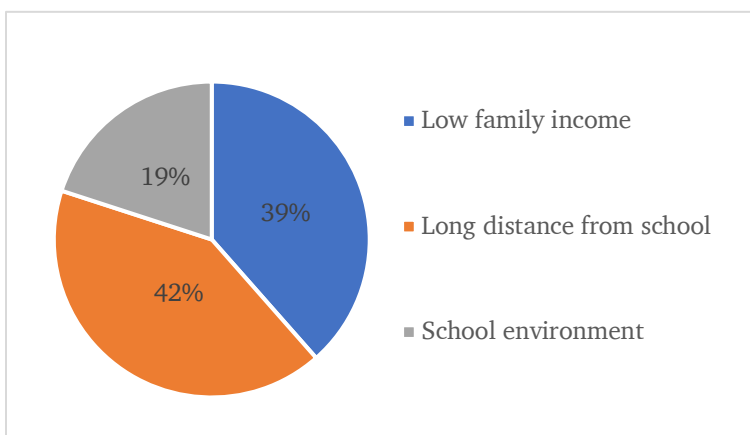
Source: Primary Data, 2020

While mentioning the causes of dropout 42.2% of parents mentioned long distance (from home to school), 38.9% mentioned low family

income and 18.9% mentioned school environment/lack of facilities.

Figure 1

Cause of Dropout (Parents' opinion)



Source: Primary Survey Data, 2020

Table 4

Distribution of Illiteracy among Parents is a Major cause of Lack of Interest in the Education of their Children

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
illiteracy of parents is a major cause of lack of interest in the education of their children	Strongly agree	16	17.8
	Agree	55	61.1
	Neutral	8	8.9
	Disagree	11	12.2
Total		90	100.0

Source: Primary Survey Data, 2020

More than half 78.9% of the parents agreed that the illiteracy of parents was a major cause of lack of interest in the education of their

children. While 12.2 % of the respondents disagreed, while 8.9% remained neutral.

Table 5*Distribution of the Ratio of Out-of-school Children*

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Out of School Children at the village level	Below 10%	4	8.9
	10 to 20%	6	13.4
	21 to 50%	17	37.7
	More than 50%	18	40.0
Total		45	100.0

Source: Primary Survey Data, 2020

While answering how many school-going age children were out of school in this village? 40% of the respondent (teachers) answered that more than 50% school going age children were

out of school in this village, 37.7% answered 21-50%, 13.4% answered that 10 to 20%, while 8.9% replied that it was below 10%.

Table 6*Distribution of Non-availability of basic Facilities at school as the major cause of Low Enrollment and high Dropouts*

	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Non-availability of basic facilities is a major cause of low enrollment and high dropouts	Agree	23	51.2
	Neutral	12	26.6
	Disagree	10	22.2
Total		45	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2020

When asked if the non-availability of basic facilities at school was the major cause of low enrollment and high dropouts, 51.2% of the teachers agreed with the statement that the non-availability of basic facilities was a major cause of low enrollment, whereas 26.6% remained neutral while 22.2% disagreed with the statement.

compulsory primary education to every child five to sixteen years. Pakistan has very low enrolment and high primary school drop-out in South Asia.

Education increases income as more educated persons would earn more, quality education is important for economic growth as there is no shortcut to the prosperity of a nation, education improves the social and economic conditions of a society by allowing better education and health for women by altering conservative thinking and bringing equality about women. Female education is the best investment that increases income and reduces mother and child mortality, it also decreases fertility rate and results in many other social benefits.

Conclusions

Pakistan is the fifth most populated country in the world and, according to United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report 2020, it is positioned at 154th out of 189 countries as per HDI. It has a life expectancy of 67.3 years at the time of birth. The GDP growth ranges from 0.4 per cent to 5.6 per cent, and per capita income in 2015-16 is 1560.7 USD. There is 36 per cent poverty in the rural areas, while the population of urban areas has a poverty of 18.2 per cent, despite all these difficulties the government of Pakistan has an obligation to provide free and

Recommendations

1. To reduce poverty the major sources of income e.g. agriculture and livestock sectors should be developed based on

- modern technics so that poverty at the grass root level is reduced by producing more job and business opportunities, food requirements are met at the provincial and national levels that ultimately contribute to increasing GDP.
2. Water is a basic commodity and necessary for life, supply of water should be ensured to each village so that people have clean water for drinking and daily use that improves health and hygiene conditions. In most cases, women and children fetch water from long distances which affects their health negatively.
 3. Access to the metaled road is very rare in Balochistan which causes hurdles for students and teachers in reaching educational Institutes, for patients to reach timely to health services, and for the general public to access markets and other facilities, Government should construct metaled roads to all major villages.
 4. Ten (10) years education plan at the provincial and five (05) year plan at the District level should be prepared with consultation of all stakeholders and should be implemented with true spirit keeping in view all the national and international commitments e.g. SDGs etc.
 5. A special monitoring cell should be established and strict monitoring of teachers' and students' absenteeism and other related issues should be ensured.
 6. More girls' schools should be opened, female teachers should be appointed in all gender-free schools to cover the gap between girls' and boys' education.
 7. Special incentives should be given to parents whose all children complete the academic year and are enrolled in the next year.
 8. Political interferences should be completely stopped by the education department, and all approval of new schools, and appointment of teaching and non-teaching staff should be purely on a merit basis.
 9. Family heads whose children are enrolled in schools should be given opportunity/skill pieces of training, entrepreneurial skills of their choice and on market demand, access to interest-free loans to increase their income so that they could afford the expenses of their children's education.
 10. To reduce child labour and domestic child labour, laws regarding the prohibition of child labour should be strictly implemented by the government.
 11. Women have a major role in both Agriculture and Livestock sectors, progress in these sectors increases opportunities for economic empowerment and participation for women and in this way, more female family members will also contribute to family income as well as in the national economy and become more empowered.
 12. A ten-year non-formal education program should be launched throughout Pakistan to educate illiterate parents and aware them of the importance of education and its positive effects on the society and development of a country.

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